Cam. d. 641. 1

A SERMON

preached at S^t. *Pauls*,

By

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Fellow of S^t. *Johns* Colledge in *Cambridge*.

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13-156

To the vertuous and Right Worſhipfull the Lady *Delves*, wife to Sir *Thomas Delves* Knight

and Baronet in Cheſhire.

MADAM,

THe world hath been dead to me of late; I wiſh I were as dead to it. It is hard to make or keep a friend in adverſity: and innocency is no protection; it rather expoſeth unto dangers. But I intend not to write ſatyres, nor to trouble your Ladyſhip with any tedious or unacceptable diſcourſe. I rather ſubmit my ſelf and cauſe to him, who is beſt able to judge: and amongſt other my worthy friends, whoſe favour hath had influence upon me, I fly unto your ſelf for protection, humbly intreating you to accept of my homage and ſervice whilſt according to my ingagements I do ever remain

Your Ladyſhips in all

hmuble obſervance,

HENRY MAISTERSON.

HEB. 13. 18.

For we trust we have a good conscience, in all things willing to live honestly.

SAint Paul (for him wee'le suppose with all the Greek Fathers, and Saint Augustine, Ambrose and Gregory among the Latine, to be the authour of this Epistle) knowing prayer to be the golden key that unlocketh the cabinet both of earthly and heavenly blessings, in these words useth an argument or reason to move the Hebrews to remember him in their prayers, and that is his confidence upon good ground that he hath a good conscience; *For we trust we have a good conscience, in all things willing to live honestly.*

Which words without any rack or violence offer themselves to this division: first, The Apostles confident perswasion, *we trust*: secondly, the Object of it, *that we have a good conscience*: thirdly, the foundation or ground upon which this edifice of trust which towers up to heaven is built, and that is in these words, *in all things willing to live honestly*. Which words are not referred to the predicate *good conscience*, as though they were a bare description thereof, or a differenee to distinguish what kind of good conscience the Apostle means, and to be read thus, We trust we have a good conscience, or a good heart, which is willing in all things to live honestly; or not able to fulfill the law of God as ἀκριβῶς propounded unto Adam, but yet willing to perform Evangelicall obedience, and in all things to live honestly: but they are referred to the subject, *we*, ἐν πᾶσι καλῶς θέλοντες, and are to be read thus, We, willing in all things to live honestly, trust we have a good conscience. And so they note unto us not barely the object of his trust, but the ground thereof. And then the reasoning

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ſtands thus. First, To move them to pray for him, he uſeth this argument. If I have a good conſcience, then you are bound by a ſpeciall relation to pray for me, not onely as a man but as a believer: but I have a good conſcience. Therefore pray for me. Secondly, To prove his minor, he reaſons thus, He that is carefull and willing in all things to live honeſtly, he hath a good conſcience, or he may be confident that he hath a good conſcience: but I am willing in all things to live honeſtly. Therefore I truſt I have a good conſcience.

To omit the coherence of theſe words with the former, noted unto us in the conjunction *For*, and to conſider them abſolutely, and in themſelves, they afford theſe three propoſitions: firſt, From the object of S^t. Pauls truſt, for that is in nature before the act converſant about it, That S^t. Paul had a good conſcience: ſecondly, From the act converſant about this object, That S^t. Paul was confidently perſwaded that he had a good conſcience: thirdly, That he was perſwaded upon this ground, becauſe he was carefull and willing in all things to live honeſtly.

Firſt, *S^t. Paul had a good conſcience.* For theſe words, *we have a good conſcience*, though read in the plurall number, are to be underſtood in the ſingular, as appeareth by the context. And I beſeech you ſomewhat more earneſtly ſo to do, that I may be reſtored to you more quickly.

And here by the way, we may take notice of S^t. Pauls modeſty (*verba hæc modeſtiæ ſerviunt*, ſaith a Commentatour upon this place) who, when he is to ſpeak any thing that tends to his own commendation, ſometimes uſeth the third perſon, as if he ſpake of ſome other, not of himſelf, 2. Cor. 12. ſometimes the plurall number, as aſhamed to appropriate that praiſe to himſelf, which indeed belongeth unto him. A good example for them to think upon, whoſe vainglorious mouths are wont to trumpet out their own praiſes, whilſt they forget that of the Greek Comedian, Κενῆς δόξης ἀδὲν ἀθλιώτερον, *nothing is more lamentable then vain glory*; or that of Chryſoſtome, Homil. 4. in 1. cap. Matth. *Si glorificari cupis, gloriam deſpice, & eris omnibus*

omnibus gloriosior; but of this a word onely by the way.

Now for the better understanding of this proposition, it is necessary first to lay open the nature of conscience in generall, and the severall acts & offices thereof: secondly the nature of good conscience, and the severall kinds thereof: thirdly, to shew what kind of good conscience S^t. Paul meaneth, when he saith, *we trust we have a good conscience.*

First, What conscience is. Conscience is a part of the practicall understanding, in all reasonable creatures, applying their actions to some rule, which it conceiveth to be the Law of God, and determining either with them, or against them.

It is a part: not that the understanding hath parts properly, it being one simple and undivided faculty, but by way of analogy in respect of divers objects and actions: And I call it a part, to shew that it is a naturall power, or quality created together with the soul, and inseparable from it, and not an act or a habit or any thing that may be lost.

Secondly, *It is a part of the understanding*, not of the will or affections. For however some effects there are in the will, and affections, which proceed from conscience, as fear and terrour, which are therefore called fear and terrour of conscience; yet these are but extrinsecall effects of conscience, and flow not immediately from it, but from the will, as from the next and immediate cause, from conscience remotely, in respect of that influence, which the understanding hath upon the affections.

Thirdly, *It is a part of the practicall understanding*; because conversant about action, about things done or to be done, and not about mere speculation.

Fourthly, *in all reasonable creatures*; to let you see the proper subject of conscience. For first every one that hath conscience must needs have reason. For conscience compareth a mans life with his rule, which requireth discourse. And therefore things that have no life, or having life that have not reason, cannot be said to have conscience. Secondly,

condly it must be a creature. For God the creatour of all things having no superiour to impose a law upon him, and consequently none that hath either right or power to inflict any punishment, cannot be said properly to have a conscience; yet we may conceive some analogy betwixt some acts of his understanding, and the excusing acts of conscience properly so called. For there being in him an eternall law or rule, which he hath purposed from eternity in all his works of creation to observe, his understanding may reflect upon the works of his hands, compare them with this rule, and judge them conformable thereunto. Thus God saw every thing that he had made, and behold it was exceeding good, Gen. 1. that is very artificiall, agreeable to that idea, which God, the most skilfull workman, before the beginning had set down for himself to do all things by. Nor onely doth the understanding of God reflecting upon his actions judge of that artificiall bonity which is in them, but also of the morall: For there being certain generall practicall notions of good and evil naturally seated in the understanding of God, according to which his will, the fountain of action, is moved (for his will is not, properly to speak, the rule of it self, but is guided by counsel) his understanding may reflect upon the morall acts of his will, compare them with their rule, and accordingly judge them just and good, pronouncing an approving sentence upon them, which hath much analogy and agreement with the excusing act of conscience properly so called.

Thirdly, *In all reasonable creatures*: because it is impossible that any reasonable creature should be without conscience, it being a part of the understanding; and if any seem to have lost it, they have onely lost the use thereof, as a mad man, or a drunken man hath lost the use of reason, and that but for a time. For God will one day awake those consciences that were here asleep, give mouths to those that here were dumbe, so that they shall speak, and never cease to speak, judgement, horrour, confusion, death. For the condemning sentence of such a conscience doth but

remain

remain like letters written with the juice of Oranges to be made legible by the fire of Gods wrath.

Fourthly, *Applying their actions to ſome rule*: Here we have the proper act of conſcience, together with the object of it. Where firſt we are to underſtand morall actions, not ſuch as are merely naturall: For theſe latter cannot be comprehended in the object of conſcience, none being ever ſo mad as to think there was either virtue or vice in them, they being the actions not of us, but of nature in us; and conſequently conſcience cannot to ſpeak properly either excuſe or accuſe us for them. Indeed it may tell us we have not done ill in them, becauſe they are neither good nor bad; but this is not properly to excuſe: for to excuſe properly is to judge that a man hath done well and virtuouſly, either in a voluntary chooſing of ſome good, which he had power to have refuſed, or in a voluntary refuſing ſome evil, which he might have choſen.

Secondly, we are to take action not ſtrictly, for externall morall action onely; but largely, as it comprehendeth both words and thoughts. For though mans law extend no further then the outward man (*Hominum leges non niſi externam honeſtatem requirunt, nec penetrant uſque ad internum cor & animum; ratio eſt, quia neque corda vident legiſlatores, nec ipſorum providentia extenditur ultra civilitatem externam*) yet Gods Law, which is the rule of conſcience, is a diſcerner of the thoughts, and intents of the heart, Heb. 4. 12. And therefore the Pſalmiſt calleth it a perfect law converting the ſoul, Pſal. 19.

Thirdly, all omiſſion of morall action is hither to be referred, whether it be *directè* or *indirectè volita*, whether it be a *velle non agere*, or a *non velle agere* when we may and ought. For conſcience beareth witneſſe of our omiſſion as well as of our commiſſion, of our not doing as well as of our doing.

Fourthly, *their actions*: for the object of conſcience is our own actions. For conſcience is a power that the ſoul hath to reflect upon it ſelf, and to judge it ſelf: And therefore not others actions, but onely ſo farre as they are

made ours, either by imputation grounded upon nature, as the ſinne of Adam; or elſe becauſe we are ſome way a cauſe of the ſinnes of others, either poſitively by furthering them, or privatively by not hindring them when we ſhould and might: And in this ſenſe that ſaying of St Gregory is true, *Qui non corrigit reſecanda, committit*; ſo likewiſe in the ſame ſenſe another prayeth, Lord forgive me my other mens ſinnes. But otherwiſe the ſinnes of others, which we are no wayes guiltie of, though they may be objects of our ſcience, and muſt be objects of our grief too, if we ſee and know them, yet they need not at all to trouble our conſcience.

Fifthly, *Which it conceiveth to be the law of God.* Theſe words I adde for a twofold reaſon: 1. Becauſe it is not neceſſarily required to the generall nature and working of conſcience, that the thing we make conſcience of ſhould be truly commanded; it is ſufficient if conſcience apprehend it to be ſo. Thus ſome out of an erroneous principle make conſcience of worſhiping reliques, of adoring images, of praying to Saints: others again oppoſe thoſe laudable ceremonies which tend to order, decency and edification in the Church, though God never required theſe things at their hands, becauſe they conceive themſelves bound thereunto by a true and reall command. 2. Becauſe it is not neceſſary that the party commanding or giving the law ſhould be truly and indeed God: it is ſufficient to the generall working of conſcience, that conſcience conceive him ſo. And therefore the Heathen made conſcience of thoſe commands which the Devil gave them in the Oracles, becauſe they thought that God ſpake by them, and in them. Virgil giveth us two examples of this in one place of his ſecond book of his Æneid.

Suſpenſi Eurypylum ſcitatum oracula Phœbi
Mittimus: iſque adytis hæc triſtia dicta reportat,
Sanguine placaſtis ventos, & virgine cæſa,
Cùm primùm Iliacas, Danai, veniſtis ad oras;
Sanguine quærendi reditus, animâque litandum
Argolica: vulgi quæ vox ut venit ad aures,
Obſtupuere

Obſtupuere animi, gelidûſque per ima cucurrit
Oſſa tremor, cui fata parent, quem poſcat Apollo.

But it is neceſſary that conſcience conceive both the command to be reall, and the party commanding to be truly God, elſe it cannot bind us to obey the command, or to fear the commander. For God onely, who is creatour of conſcience, hath this priviledge to bind conſcience: And none can give this ſubjection to any, but to ſuch a one as he apprehendeth to be more then a creature. And therefore the Heathen were wont to call thoſe that were ſent to inquire of their oracles θεωροὶ, ἀπὸ τῦ περὶς θεὸν ὁρᾶσθαι or ὁρᾶν, *vel ex* θεὸς & ὄρα, *quaſi Dei curam gerentes*, and the ſhips wherein they were ſent, θεωρίδες, and their ſacrifices, θεωρίαι.

And if any object and ſay, That we are and ought to be obedient to the laws of men for conſcience ſake, Rom. 13. 5. And therefore humane laws bind conſcience. I anſwer, That humane laws bind not conſcience properly by inherent virtue in themſelves, but by virtue of the generall law of God, which commandeth obedience unto men; as water may burn or ſcald, not by any naturall quality from it ſelf, but by heat received from fire: and a breach is made in conſcience, not ſimply becauſe mans law is neglected, but becauſe Gods law is broken. For, *Whoſoever reſiſteth the power reſiſteth the ordinance of God*, Rom. 13. 2.

Laſtly, *Determining either with them, or againſt them*, which is another act of conſcience, and that is, after application of our actions to their rule, to judge of their conformity or diſformity thereunto.

But for the better underſtanding of conſcience, conſider with me theſe diſtinct acts, and offices of conſcience.

Firſt, to know and keep the law and rule which a man thinketh himſelf bound to obſerve: and conſcience in this reſpect is called συνείδησις.

Secondly, To take notice of a mans actions: before they are done to conſider what he is about to do, after, to remember and bear witneſſe of them upon occaſion, judging

of the entity and existence of the action, as whether done or not done, whether with such and such circumstances, or without.

Thirdly, To apply the action to the rule, and compare these two together; which act is called συνείδησις, and from it conscience in the Schoolmans opinion hath its name, because it is a knowing of the action together with the rule, or an applying of these two together.

Fourthly, To judge of the quality of the action according to the rule, or of its agreeing or disagreeing to the same; and this act is called κρίσις, the last and perfectest act of reason, or of conscience. And because every law containeth two things. 1. A command of obedience: 2. A threatning of punishment in case obedience be not performed: First conscience judgeth whether the command be kept or transgressed, and consequently whether the action for quality be good or evil, which is to excuse or accuse: Secondly, It judgeth of the guilt and desert, whether the punishment threatned belong to the agent for this action or not, and so absolveth or condemneth.

These are the intrinsecall acts of conscience, which flow immediately from it; but by reason of that influence which the understanding hath upon the affections, there is a fift act of conscience which is to comfort and torment in respect of good and bad actions past; to spurre on, to bridle and restrain in respect of good and bad actions to come: which it doth by stirring up those foure principall affections of the soul, as Aquinas calleth them, *viz.* Joy and Sorrow, Hope and Fear; but this is but an extrinsecall effect of conscience, as I have already shewed. All this is done by a practicall syllogisme thus, ———

Every one that committeth murder transgresseth the law of God, and deserveth everlasting damnation: But, saith the conscience of him that is guiltie, *I have committed such an act, at such a time, in such a place, which is murder: Therefore I have transgressed the law of God, &c.*

He that committeth murder transgresseth the law of God, and deserveth everlasting damnation: there is the first act of con-

conſcience, *viz.* knowledge of the command, and of the puniſhment due to the tranſgreſſion of it. *But I have committed ſuch an act, in ſuch a place, at ſuch a time*; there is the ſecond act of conſcience, which is to remember and bear witneſſe of a mans actions, whether done, or not done, whether with ſuch and ſuch circumſtances or without. *Which is murder*: there is the third act, application of the generall knowledge to this particular action. *Therefore I have tranſgreſſed the law of God*: there is accuſation; *and deſerved everlaſting damnation*; there is ſentence of condemnation. And upon this ſentence in the underſtanding, followeth fear and terrour in the affections. And thus much for the explication of the generall nature of conſcience, and the ſeverall acts and offices thereof.

The next thing that I am to inſiſt upon, is the nature of good conſcience, and the ſeverall kinds thereof. Conſcience thus deſcribed is either good or bad: A good conſcience is ſuch a one as is conformable to that rule, by which it ought to be guided; A bad one, is ſuch a one as wants conformity thereunto. Both may be diſtinguiſhed according to their ſeverall ſubjects, into the good and bad conſcience of men, and of Angels.

Mans conſcience (for that onely we are to ſpeak of now) is good when conformable to the will of God revealed in the Scriptures. Now becauſe the Scripture hath two parts, anſwering to the twofold eſtate of man before and ſince the fall, *viz.* the Law and the Goſpel, hence it cometh to paſſe that good conſcience is twofold; either Legally good, which hath that perfection which the law requireth; or Evangelically good, which hath that perfection which the Goſpel accepteth unto ſalvation: Of the former ſort was the conſcience of Adam before his fall; of the latter ſort was the conſcience of Adam after his repentance. I might be large in ſhewing the difference, betwixt theſe two kinds of good conſcience; but I haſte. This latter may again be diſtinguiſhed into an upright conſcience, and a peaceable conſcience. An upright conſcience is a conſcience ſprinkled with the blood of Chriſt, or, a conſcience

putified by faith, such as is in every man that hath repented him truly of his sinnes past, being for the present earefull and willing above all things in all things to live honestly.

There are these things required to it.

First, That it be well principled, and know in some good measure Gods commandments, accounting them the rule by which all action is to be guided. According to that Psal. 119. vers. 105. *Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my paths.* For as it is necessarily required to the generall nature and working of conscience, that it have some principles which it may upon occasion apply to particular actions; so it is essentiall to a good or an upright conscience, that it know the true rule, and be informed with good and honest principles, so that so farre as conscience is either ignorant of the true rule, or guided by a false, so farre it is not good, but evil and corrupt: and if it be either altogether ignorant of any of the main commandments, the practice of which is necessarily required to a Christian life, as namely, that we must believe in Christ, repent of our sinnes, and the like; or entertain any principle, which doth by direct and immediate consequence overthrow any of these, it is not onely *secundum quid*, but *simpliciter* and *absolutè mala*, and falleth short of that evangelicall goodnesse, which is spoken of in my text. And because knowledge of the commandment and things to be practiced doth necessarily presuppose knowledge of the creed and of things to be believed, it being impossible he should not erre in principles of action, who is ignorant of the fundamentall points of faith; for example, he that thinketh there is no God, or no Christ, or that they regard not mens actions, to reward the good and punish the bad, or that is ignorant of any of these three propositions, he can never lay down this for a practicall conclusion, That God is to be served, or Christ to be obeyed: *For he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him*, Heb. 11. 6. hence it cometh to passe that a knowledge & assent to the fundamentall points of faith, at least generall and confused, is necessarily required

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to integrity of conſcience, as being the foundation of that practicall knowledge, which ought to be the rule of our actions.

Secondly, As the ſecond act of conſcience in generall was to take notice of a mans actions, ſo it is required in the ſecond place to the nature of an upright conſcience, that out of a godly ſolicitude and fear to offend God, it obſerve a mans carriage, and take notice of his actions; that it conſider before his actions what he is about to do, that it remember and bear witneſſe afterward what he hath done, that ſo they may be applyed to their rule: And this is *actio intellectus imperata à voluntate*. And therefore thoſe men that out of a naturall ſtrength of memory, or becauſe of ſome extraordinary impreſſion that ſome notorious ſinnes have made in them, remember their evil actions againſt their will, whereas they would forget them, that ſo they might be ſecure; or thoſe that out of carnall ſecurity take no notice of their actions, but do things raſhly, hand over head, & afterward careleſſely forget what they have done, have not integrity of conſcience. I ſpeak not here of that forgetfulneſſe which proceedeth from a defect in memory, but either from a cuſtome of ſinne, as thoſe that have got ſuch a habit of ſwearing that they know not when they ſweare, or from groſſe ſecurity, and want of fear of the Lord.

Thirdly, That it apply a mans actions to the right rule impartially. And this likewiſe is *actio intellectus imperata à voluntate*, and proceedeth from that godly ſolicitude, which I ſpake of before. And therefore thoſe men that apply not their actions at all to the law of God, or if they do, do it partially, groſſely favouring themſelves in their ſinnes as being loth to find them out or to part with them, have not integritie of conſcience. Nay, theſe are far from having it: For, *Nemo periculoſius peccat, quàm qui peccata defendit*, None ſinne more deſperately then thoſe that find out colours and excuſes to cover and extenuate their ſinne. And this impartiall application muſt be before and after our actions; before, that ſinne may be avoyded; after, that

if

if we have ſinned we may repent. Of the former we have a notable example in Joſeph, who when his Miſtreſſe tempted him to that wicked act, conſented not immediately unto her, but out of a godly ſolicitude and fear to offend God, applyeth the action to the law of God, and upon impartiall application finding it to be unlawfull, returneth her this anſwer, *How ſhall I do this great wickednesse, and ſinne againſt God?* Of the latter we have an example in the Prophet David, Pſalm. 119. 59. *I thought on my wayes, and turned my feet to thy teſtimonies.* And the want of this impartiall application, as it is the cauſe of mens lying in ſinne without repentance, ſo it is the cauſe of their firſt fall into ſinne. *Hoc nos peſſimos facit, quòd nemo vitam ſuam reſpicit*, ſaith Seneca.

For upon impartiall application neceſſarily followeth the fourth act of an upright conſcience, which is the concluſion of the former premiſſes, to wit, a true and ſincere judgement of the action according to the commandment, at leaſt ſo farre as conſcience ſhall be inlightned and inabled to judge; or a determination, that thoſe particular actions are good, which are indeed ſuch, and that thoſe are evil, which are in their nature evil; And this likewiſe is either before or after our actions. If this practicall judgement of an upright conſcience be before our actions, then the effect of it is *cohibere a malo, & inſtigare ad bonum*, to ſpurre us on to the practice of good, and to reſtrain us effectually from evil: which efficacious power the underſtanding hath upon the will and affections, and conſequently upon the whole man, *virtute prioris actûs voluntatis*, by virtue of a former complete and peremptory reſolution of the will, whereby we are reſolved to chooſe that which is good, and refuſe that which is evil, where ever we meet with it; which is that very deſire in all things to live honeſtly, which the Apoſtle ſpeaketh of in my text. For that deſire which is the foundation of the Apoſtles truſt, is not a bare velleity, but a *completa voluntas*, which when he came to particulars put him upon action. And therefore thoſe men whoſe conſciences put them not upon the practice

ctice of good, nor restrain them effeaually from evil; but suffer them to live in the wilfull omission of good, or commission of evil, have not integritie of conscience.

If the action be past, and bad for quality, then the judgement of an upright conscience is to accuse and condemne, that is, to judge the sinne worthy damnation: And the effect of this is grief and sorrow, not onely for the punishment we have made our selves obnoxious to, but for the sin it self. And therefore seared consciences, which never smite men for their sins; and secure consciences, which do it but sometimes, and for grosser sinnes; and on the other side wicked tormenting consciences, which cause grief onely for the punishment and not for the offence (such as was Caln's, *My sinne is greater then I can bear*) these kinds of consciences are not upright.

But if the action past be good for matter and manner, then the act of conscience should be to excuse and absolve, that is, to pronounce it such as God is well pleased with, and doth accept to salvation in Christ: And the effect of this is joy and comfort, such as none can expresse, and such as a carnall man cannot conceive.

But because no action is accepted with this kind of acceptation, unlesse it proceed from justifying faith, (*For without faith it is impossible to please God to salvation*, Heb. 11. 6.) and consequently from an upright conscience, which is a necessary attendant of faith; (*For faith purifieth the heart*) hence it cometh to passe that a man cannot know that any act he doth is such, unlesse he know his conscience to be upright and purged by faith: which reflexed act, because it necessarily presupposeth integrity of conscience, (for a man cannot know that his conscience is pure unlesse it be so) therefore this is not essentiall to integrity, but to peace of conscience. And so I proceed to the second kind of good conscience, which is a peaceable conscience.

A peaceable conscience includeth all that I have said of an upright conscience, and superaddeth something more: For though every peaceable conscience be an upright con-

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ſcience; yet every upright conſcience is not alwayes able to ſpeak peace. That which it ſuperaddeth is a power to reflect upon it ſelf, and to teſtifie that it is upright, and purged with the bloud of Chriſt. For as a man may be alive, and not know that he is alive, as a child in his mothers wombe, or a man in ſome diſtemper; ſo it is poſſible that a man may have faith and a good conſcience, and yet either through his own weakneſſe, or ſome other extraordinary diſtemper or temptation, not know for the preſent that his conſcience is good. But when he is confidently perſwaded upon good ground, that all his ſinnes are pardoned, and that his perſon is juſtified and at peace with God, then he hath not onely uprightneſſe but peace of conſcience.

And ſo I have done with the ſecond thing I was to treat of, the nature of good conſcience in generall & the kinds of it: I paſſe unto the third. And that is, what kind of good conſcience S.t Paul meaneth when he ſaith, *We truſt we have a good conſcience.*

Firſt, His words are not to be underſtood of a conſcience Legally good, or at the barre of Juſtice. For it implieth a contradiction, that any ſonne of fallen Adam ſhould have ſuch a conſcience: for then he ſhould be fallen and not fallen; faln becauſe a ſon of fallen Adam, not fallen becauſe his conſcience were legally good. For this is the ſentence of the law, *Curſed is every one that abideth not in all things that are written in the book of the law to do them.* It muſt therefore be underſtood of a conſcience Evangelically good, or at the barre of mercy.

Secondly, An upright conſcience muſt be underſtood, and not a peaceable one: For though without doubt S.t Paul had a peaceable conſcience, and theſe very words do imply as much, becauſe he was perſwaded upon good ground that his conſcience was good; yet that goodneſſe which is the object of his truſt, is goodneſſe of integrity, not of tranquillity; becauſe his truſt is built upon this groũd, that he was willing in all things to live honeſtly: which neceſſarily inferreth integritie but not tranquillitie of conſcience; becauſe a man may deſire in all things to live honeſtly,

neſtly, and yet ſometime for the preſent not have peace of conſcience.

Thus you ſee the meaning of the propoſition, St Paul had an upright conſcience.

This I might demonſtrate *à priori*, from the cauſes of integritie, as 1. The Spirit of God, the chief authour thereof, which was not wanting to St Paul. 2. The word of God, the externall inſtrument, which St Paul was not ignorant of. 3. Faith reſting upon the promiſes of that word, the internall inſtrument thereof, wherewith he did abound. I might likewiſe prove it *à poſteriori*, and ſhew you that St Pauls whole life after his converſion, which laſted from the year of our Saviours paſſion, till the fourth year before the deſtruction of Jeruſalem (in all, about thirty ſeven years) was nothing elſe but a continuall exerciſe of an upright conſcience. And here I might ſhew you what he did for conſcience ſake, how he travelled to preach the word of God in Arabia, in Galatia and Phrygia, in Syria, Aſia and Italy, in France, Spain and other countries; and that in the mean time whereas he might (as good reaſon he might) waiting on the altar have been partaker with the altar, he notwithſtanding laboured working with his hands, that he might not be burdenſome to any, 1. Cor. 4. He wronged no man, corrupted no man, defrauded no man, 2. Cor. 7. 'Tis not his own teſtimony of himſelf, but the teſtimony of the ſpirit of truth by him, and of him.

I might here ſhew likewiſe what he ſuffered for conſcience ſake: of the Jews five times he received fourty ſtripes ſave one, thrice he was beaten with rods, once ſtoned; he was ſtock'd at Philippi, after again apprehended at Jeruſalem, kept priſoner two years at Cæſarea, from thence ſent bound to Rome, where he was put to death by Nero, that *ſanguiſuga*, that cruell and blood-thirſtie tyrant. But that time which is remaining bids me make haſte.

Firſt, then it followeth from this propoſition, That every man is bound to get integrity of conſcience. For what St Paul ſaith here of himſelf, is not proper to him, but common to all believers: And therefore if S^t. Paul, not as St Paul

but as a believer, have an upright conſcience, it followeth *ſecundùm id generis, quod eſt in ſpecie*, That every true believer hath an upright conſcience, and that every man is bound to get one.

Here likewiſe vaniſheth, like the morning dew before the ſun, the opinion of thoſe that are ſo farre from goodneſſe themſelves, that they think there is no ſuch thing *in rerum natura*, in the wide world, as good conſcience, that the ſtate of regeneration is but preciſeneſſe, that true holineſſe is but an *idea* or an *ens rationis*, a Plato's commonwealth or a mere phanſie created in the heads of ſome fond and ſcrupulous men; That think with the Thnetopſychitæ that the ſouls of men are mortall, and periſh with their bodies; or with the Sadducees and Simon Magus that there is no reſurrection; or with Pope Leo the tenth, that the ſtory of the birth, death and reſurrection of Chriſt is but *futilis & anilis fabula*, an old-wifes tale, fit for nothing but to fear fools, and keep people in awe, or perhaps to be a bait to catch ſuch fiſh as S. Peter fiſhed for, that have their mouths full of ſilver; or that think with the Atheiſt that there is no God, or at leaſt with Epicurus, that there is no providence, that forſooth it cannot ſtand with the majeſty of God to regard what is done in this inferiour world (*ſcilicet is ſuperis labor eſt*) making God, as Tertullian complaineth, *Otioſum & inexercitum neminem in rebus humanis*. But this web is not worth ſweeping down: I will not therefore honour the hereſie (pardon my miſtake, I cannot afford it ſo good a name, becauſe it is a univerſall revolt) but the Apoſtacy, the Atheiſm ſo much as to ſpend time to confute it; I will rather turn my arguments againſt them into prayers to God for them, that if it be poſſible, the thought of their hearts may be forgiven them: for they are in the gall of bitterneſſe, and in the bond of iniquitie. And for our ſelves, let it ever be our humble prayer to Almighty God, that of all judgements he would keep from us ſpirituall judgements, blindneſſe of mind, hardneſſe of heart, a reprobate ſenſe, &c. Ever praying as the Church Letany directeth us, From all falſe doctrine & hereſie, from hard-

hardneſſe of heart and contempt of thy word and commandments, good Lord deliver us. And, Grant we beſeech the, O Lord, that we may never make ſhipwrack of faith and good conſcience, the Ark and ſhip wherein faith is preſerved.

And ſo I proceed to a juſt cenſure of thoſe that neglect integrity of conſcience: and here it is no leſſe then a wonder to behold how conſcience is neglected on every ſide, which yet is not ſo wonderfull as lamentable.

The covetous man ſells the integrity of his conſcience for a little red and white earth, one of the baſeſt things in the world, if we except the party that adores it, and maketh it his God: which when he hath got, the Cheſt he puteth it into may be ſaid to poſſeſſe it as truly as he. For it keepeth it (*clauſum poſſidet arca jovem*) and he doth no more: For he is afraid to uſe it. *Quærit, & inventis miſer abſtinet, & timet uti.* The ambitious man ſelleth it for the thing called Honour which can neither be got nor enjoyed without labour and travail. *Fructus honos oneris, fructus honoris onus.* And therefore the Hebrew כָּבוֹד which ſignifieth *honour* cometh *à radice* כָּבַד which ſignifies *ponderoſum eſſe*, to be heavy or burthenſome. To which we may apply that of S^t. Auguſtine, *Qui te amat, non te cognoſcit; qui te contemnunt, ipſi te intelligunt.* The envious man, for a little ἐπιχαιρεκακία, or a ſhort rejoycing at the miſery of his brethren. The vain glorious man, for the breath of the multitude, which he can enjoy no longer then he is every mans ſervant, *Univerſis ſinguliſq; ſervit ſervus gloria.* The adulterer, for a momentany dalliance, which perhaps leaveth rottenneſſe behind it in his bones.

The proud perſon that doteth upon apparell, the thing that blazons mans downfall and the devils conqueſt, puts of integrity of conſcience as a wear out of faſhion, to put on a phantaſtick garment, which may force the beholders into wonder, not ſo much at the ſtrangeneſſe of the unwonted habit as the monſtrous folly of the party that wears it. Nazianzen affords theſe no better a name then ſilk-wormes

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or butterflies; and doubtlesse such ridiculous creatures they are in the eyes of God, and his Saints and Angels, who value not the adorning of the outward man, but the comely ornament of an upright and undefiled conscience.

The beastly intemperate drunkard and glutton (pardon the weaknesse of the expression) chops away the integrity of his conscience for a sinne which turnes men into swine, with such devilish charms, that they would not leave their bruitish nature for their former reason; or if you will, for a pleasure scarce two fingers long, *quæ non durat nisi quantum durat transitus ille per gulam*, which continues but whilst the meat passeth from mouth to stomach; and that too is but an anteambulo to usher in a thousand pains and distempers. Such pleasures as these are but *δέσποιναι προσποιούμεναι*, *deceitfull mistresses*, or rather *λύπαι ἡδοναῖς περιπεπλεγμέναι*, *bitter-sweet delights*, or, *pleasures mixt with pain*: Of which S^t. Cyprian excellently, *Voluptatem vicisse voluptas est maxima*, The greatest pleasure, is to overcome these pleasures.

The sacrilegious Church-robber puts out the integrity of his conscience, by putting forth his unhallowed hand to purloyn that which is sacred, and to eat the forbidden fruit, upon which God hath set a *noli me tangere*. This stole a good conscience from Adam, and cast him out of paradise, whilst he robbed God of his forbidden fruit; and I fear it hath deprived many a sonne of Adam, not onely of the integrity of his conscience, but of his earthly inheritance.

Ile adde but one instance more, and that is those restlesse spirits, whose cheif study it is, without call from God, by wicked contrivement and sinfull practices to enervate and weaken that wholesome established government, which through the provident care of vertuous kings and religious parliaments hath a longe time flourished and still doth flourish (thanks be to God and a good King) both in Church and state. These sell integrity of conscience for swarms of discontented thoughts, whereby they do but turn themselves into hives of unnumbred cares, sorrows

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and paſſions, make themſelves in an eſpeciall manner the outlawryes of heaven, and ſometimes procure their own juſt and deſerved puniſhment.

Thus I have run through ſome ſinnes no leſſe dangerous then common: it would not be hard, were it not too tedious, to do the like in all profeſſions; but I'le onely inſtance in one, without private ſpleen to place or perſon, and that is the unconſcionable tradeſman: And for the reſt, becauſe time will not permit, I leave their own conſciences to make the application.

A man would bleſſe himſelf to think what a world of myſteries are found out in every trade, what tricking and counterfeſance to delude the ſenſe, what intricate devices of ſophiſtry & diſſimulation, what lying, equivocating, perhaps ſwearing and forſwearing, and all this for the getting of a little mony, which when it is lawfully got is but μαμωνᾶ τῆς ἀδικίας, Luke 16. 9. that is, not Mamon about which the ſonnes of men uſe to be unrighteous, as ſome underſtand the words; but *Mamona fallax*, ſo Beza, that is, deceivable and uncertain riches, when compaſſed by lawfull means, and no fit objects for us to truſt upon, being ſuch things as are but got out of the bowels of the earth, and which they that have them are forced many times (like Euclio in Plautus) to hide there again. And yet notwithſtanding how ordinary is it with men, for the getting of this traſh, to tranſgreſſe both againſt religion and reaſon, as if they hoped that after this life there were nothing to be hoped for; and to violate the laws of juſtice in their unequall weights and meaſures, in their abuſing ignorant and unskilfull chapmen, whereas commutative juſtice obſerves *proportionem arithmeticam*, an arithmeticall proportion, which is immutably one and the ſame in reſpect of all perſons of what quality ſoever. Such as theſe ſell integrity of conſcience for gain, and yet gain nothing by that bargain but the loſſe of their ſouls, whilſt with the golden hook they ſwallow down the worm of conſcience, and barter away their own eternall happineſſe for very trifles, which, if they did but like the good merchant buy that pearl our Saviour

Saviour ſpeaks of, Matth. 13. ſhould as farre as were convenient as a mantiſſa or an overplus be caſt in at their bargain. But if any ſhall make profeſſion of religion profits ſtirrup to get up by, and bait craft with humility, rough-caſting his countenance as if by an hypocriticall monopoly he had ingroſt all honeſty and integrity of conſcience, that he may the more eaſily deceive, his caſe is farre worſe then the former. Is religion grown now to be an art of deceiving? or doth he deſerve the name of Chriſtian, whoſe chief ſtudy it is *ſcitè mentiri, id eſt, mentiri ut lucro ſit, nec tamen poſsis deprehendi*, as Eraſmus ſpeaketh. Nay I muſt tell him heis ſtark nought as well as the former, and doubleth his fault by ſeeming good. And if any notwithſtanding this perſwaſion ſhall ſtill perſiſt, either in this or in any other ſinfull way, let them go on to pleaſe themſelves, and diſpleaſe their God in their over greedy purſuit of unprofitable vanitie. Let me onely have an upright conſcience for my portion, ἧς οὐδὲν κτῆμα σεμνότερον, οὐδὲ βεβαιότερόν ἐστι, as Iſocrates of virtue; and let me never want it till I envy them.

And for our ſelves, if we delight not to weave the web of our future wo, let it be our chiefeſt care to get, and having got, to keep integritie of conſcience. Ile adde but two motives to move you thereunto; A good conſcience will be your beſt friend, and a bad conſcience will be your worſt enemy.

1. A bad conſcience will be your worſt enemy. It deprives us for the preſent of union with God, of communion with Chriſt, of intereſt in his promiſes, of protection of his angels, and of title to heaven; and when God ſhall awake it and arm it againſt us, it will ſting us with ſuch torments, as I pray God we may rather know by relation then experience. An ancient Father calls this horrour of conſcience, *primitias infernalis flammæ*; and I may call it a walking hell. For our Saviour himſelf ſeemeth to intimate that the rackings of a ſelf-accuſing conſcience are the greateſt part of their torments that are condemned to that dungeon where darkeſſe putteth on her blackeſt garment.

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2. A good conſcience will be our beſt friend. It will be our moſt plain-dealing friend, our faſteſt friend, and our poteteſt friend.

1. Our moſt plain-dealing friend. Some are flattering friends and will not ſpeak and inform men of their miſcarriages, but rather make them believe that all their vices are virtues, and all their dusky actions chryſtalline. *Nimis ſciti ſycophanta*, to uſe Plautus his phraſe, men that live altogether out of themſelves ſtudying other mens humours. Like Gnatho in Terence, *Quicquid dicunt laudo, id rurſum ſi negant, laudo id quoque: negat quis? nego; ait? aio.* Others again are fearfull friends, and dare not ſpeak leſt they incurre diſpleaſure, and indeed all men naturally are diſpleaſed with thoſe that inform them of their miſdoings, eſpecially thoſe that are great, and unwonted to be croſt in their deſires. Theſe many times reward good counſel with ill turns, and account reall injuries the juſt recompence of wholſome reproof: witneſſe John the Baptiſt, who loſt his head for telling Herod it was not lawfull for him to keep his brothers wife. Witneſſe Caliſthenes, who loſt his life, not for betraying Alexander to others, but becauſe he would not betray Alexander to himſelf, and account him worthy of divine worſhip, as all his deteſtable flatterers did. Witneſſe St Paul in my text, who, if St Chryſoſtoms teſtimony be true in his firſt book *adverſus vituperatores vitæ monaſticæ*, was ſlain by Nero for diſwading an harlot of his from proſtituting her ſelf to his ungodly deſires. The obſervation of which practices of great ones cauſed a witty ſpeach to fall from a famous man of our times, that whoſoever ſhould follow truth too near the heels it might happily ſtrike out his teeth. And in this regard the moſt are affraid to admoniſh, eſpecially great ones when they do amiſſe, and all generally are ſhie and loth to ſpeak truth. But now a good conſcience neither deſireth to flatter us, nor feareth to tell us the truth, be we what we will or can be however it be taken.

2. It is our faſteſt friend. The relation betwixt man and wife is a near relation; but the relation betwixt a man and his conſcience is nearer. Conſcience lieth with us,

ſits with us, rides with us; a man may as ſoone fly from himſelf as from his conſcience. Jonathan never adhered ſo to David, though the text ſaith, *he loved him, as his own ſoul.* Niſus never ſtuck ſo cloſe to Euryalus, though he deſired by his own death to ranſome the others life, *Me, me, adſum qui feci, in me convertite ferrum, &c.* Nor This be to her beloved Pyramus, though ſhe endevoured to accompany him after death, *Quique, à me morte revelli Heu ſolâ poteras: poteris nec morte revelli.* I ſay none of theſe did ſo adhere to other, as good conſcience will to us; when riches, when friends when parents, when life and breath forſake us, good conſcience can, yea cannot chooſe but cleave unto us:

Thirdly, It is our potenteſt friend. Good conſcience is the darling of the Almighty, which if we do but continue faithfull in her ſervice will crown us with peace of conſcience here, and hereafter with eternall happineſſe. For though theſe two may happily be ſevered for ſome time, as I have already ſhewed, yet the fruit of conſtancy in righteouſneſſe is peace even in this life. And therefore S^t. Auguſtine calls them *duas ſorores*; & he that is conſtant in his love to the one, ſhall be ſure to be beloved of the other. For integrity and peace, like Martha and Mary, dwell under one roof. O ſweet and bleſſed name of peace, the beauty of heaven, the deſire of earth, the joy of angels, that every good, and every thing, that all that man delights in! Who but a man poſſeſt with frenzie would not labour for thee? who but a cruell tyrant againſt his own ſoul can be content with any other reward but thee? *O felix conſcientia jucunditas* (cries out holy Auguſtine, as in an extaſy) *paradiſus deliciarum, palatium Dei, thalamus Chriſti, habitaculum Spiritûs ſancti: Tu in terra ad hoc es, & in cœlo habitas.* O happy, thrice happy peace of conſcience; thou art yet on earth, and yet thou dwelleſt in heaven, or rather thou changeſt the earth thou artſt in, into heaven, what have not the bleſſed Saints done for thee? what have not the crowned martyrs ſuffered with thee? Bleſſed is that ſoul which poſſeſſeth thee, or rather which thou poſſeſſeſt. For it hath in deepeſt ſorrow height of joy, proſperity in adverſity, liberty in captivity

vity, and life in death. 'Tis an inſtrument that 's ſweetly tuned, 'tis an angell clad in fleſh, 'tis a mint of golden thoughts, 'tis a world of joy and concord, where there is nothing but halcyon and ſummer dayes of peace. Happy is the man that is in ſuch a caſe, yea bleſſed is he that hath peace of conſcience for his portion.

And now me thinkes it is labour in vain for Coſmographers to ſpend themſelves in finding out the place where paradiſe was ſeated. It was not the whole earth, as ſome conceive; nor a place mounted higher then the middle region of the air, as others; nor betwixt the tropicks in the torrid zone under the equinoctiall; nor in the countrey of Eden, or in the parting of the two regions Aſſyria and Babylonia: It is not in your pleaſant gardens, though they perhaps may excell thoſe of Alcinous mentioned by Homer, when in the pride of their ſpring they are beſpangled with all choyſe of eye-pleaſing flowers; nor in your orchards of delight, ſurpaſſing the Elyſian fields, adorned with variety of beautifull walks, & thoſe ſhaded with the green canopy of every pleaſant and fruitfull tree: It is not in your glorious wardrobes, though they perhaps be fild with garments of ſilk, and of broydered work, of fine linen corall and pearl: It is not upon your couches of Ivory, nor in venereous imbraces upon beds of down, deckt with coverings of tapiſtry, and of carved work, perfumed with myrrhe, aloes, and ſynamon. It is not on your richly furniſhed tables, though they abounded with all variety of creatures that earth, and ſea, and air can afford: But if you will needs know where to find out this place of bliſſe, believe me (for you may) it ever was, and is, and there onely is, where there is tranquillity and peace of conſcience.

Laſtly, good conſcience, if we continue faithfull in her ſervice, will crown us with eternall happineſſe. What preferments hath ſhe procured at the mercifull hands of God, for all thoſe that have lived and dyed in her ſervice? How doth joy now triumph in the eyes, and comfort lodge in the hearts of all thoſe, that whilſt they were here upon earth were carefull with S^t. Paul to keep a conſcience voyd of

offence toward God, and toward men. How must their souls needs be full of angels pleasures, and swell with overflowing delights, how do they bury the miseries that befell them here, in the triumph of that conquest which they have obtained over the enemies of their salvation? Though my speech should be as endlesse, as their joyes, yet would it come too short of a full expression. For the excellency of happinesse can neither come out of the speaker by relation, nor enter into the hearer by apprehension, yet I'le tell you what S. Augustine saith of it, in the 22. Chap. of his meditation. *O tu vita quam praparavit Deus iis qui diligunt eum: vita vitalis, vita beata, vita tranquilla, vita secura, vita pulchra, vita munda, vita casta, vita ignara mortis, nescia tristitia, &c. Quantò plùs valeo mecum considerare, tantò plùs amore tui langueo.* And no marvel, holy Augustine. For those that enjoy this life behold to their unspeakable comfort the host royall of the blessed Angels, the holy spirits of Saints departed, the noble army of martyrs, which now shine much brighter then those flames, which here put a period to their transitory lives, the glorious company of the Apostles, the goodly fellowship of the prophets, and which is more, the most sacred humility of our Saviour, and his comely face, fairer then the sonnes of men, clearer then the sun, and that which infinitely transcends what is or can be said, the glorious presence of him, who is all in all; a power ineffable, a vertue infinite, a light by abundant clarity invisible. I will therefore conclude with S. Augustines exclamation, *O ergò felix jucunditas, & jucunda felicitas sanctos videre, cum sanctis esse, & sanctum esse; Deum videre, & Deum in aeternum habere, & ultrà.*

God of his infinite mercy teach our consciences now whilst we live to nature, to dy to sinne, that so when we dy to nature we may live with him in this blissefull life of glory.

FINIS.

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